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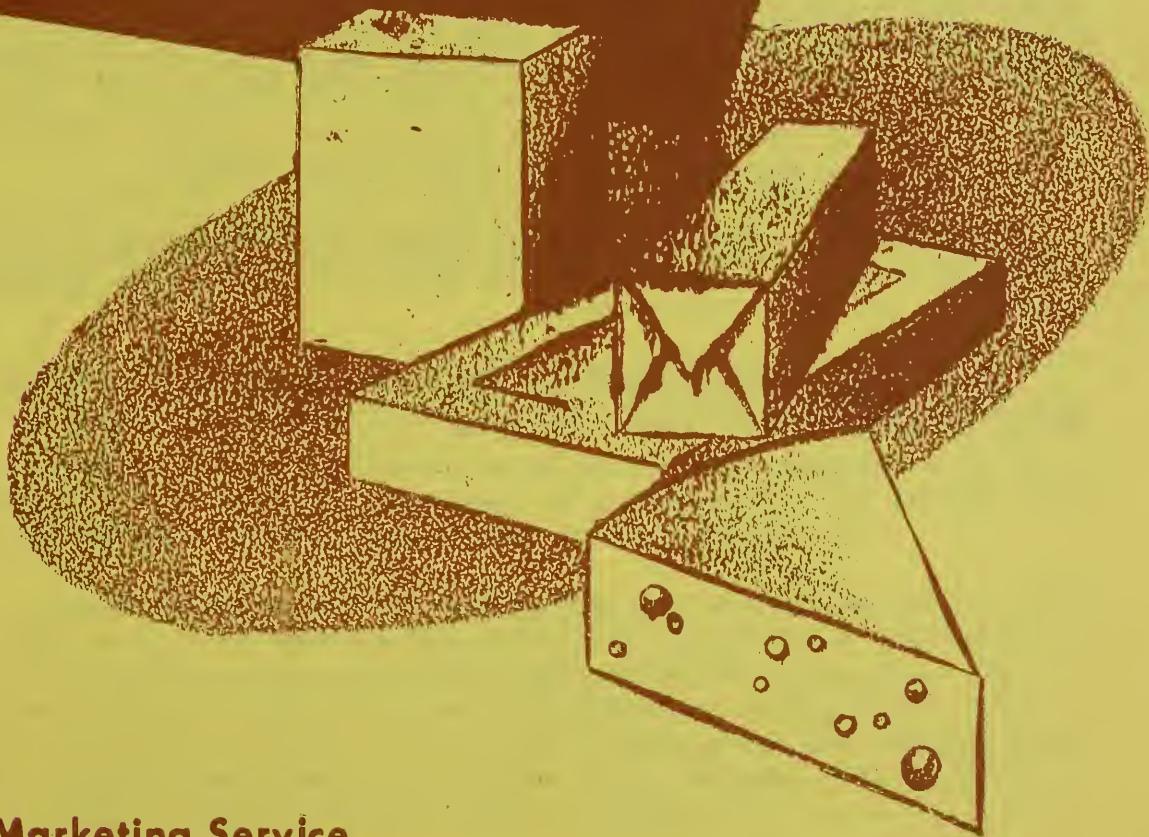
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Household Purchases of Butter, Cheese, Nonfat Dry Milk Solids, and Margarine, March 1956

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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Agricultural Marketing Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Agriculture-Washington

PREFACE

This is one in a series of monthly reports, the first of which was published for April 1954, showing estimates of current household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data on butter and margarine only for the months April 1953-March 1954 are also available. The data prior to April 1954 were based on a sample of about 4,300 families and were adjusted to the level currently reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, MARCH 1956

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers, only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

United States householders continued to report larger butter purchases than year ago levels. During March 1956, householders bought almost 7 percent more butter than in March 1955. Margarine purchases by householders during March 1956 were 5 percent less than in the same month a year earlier. This was the 6th consecutive month of decline following 12 months in which margarine purchases had been larger than in the corresponding months a year earlier.

Householders also reported slightly larger purchases of natural cheese products during March 1956 than a year earlier, while purchases of processed cheese products were down almost 15 percent. Cottage cheese purchases for home use were up sharply from the same month in 1955. As in the preceding month, purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for home use in March 1956 were less than a year earlier following 10 months in which they had been substantially higher than in the same months of the April 1954-January 1955 period.

These indications of change are based on estimated monthly household purchase volumes by a representative nationwide sample of 5,800 families who report, on a continuing basis, their weekly purchases of selected foods and other household products.

Butter: Total purchases of butter for household use during the 4-week period of March 1956 were reported at just over 68 million pounds compared with 64 million pounds for the 4-week period of March 1955. About 47 percent of all families made a butter purchase during March 1956 compared with 45 percent a year earlier. Both the frequency of purchase and the average size of purchase were somewhat higher than a year earlier (table 1).

Butter purchases by householders during the year ending March 31, 1956, were about 5 percent larger than in the corresponding period of 1954-55. Butter prices to consumers were about the same during both periods. In addition, the percentage of all families buying butter during April 1955-March 1956 was up about 4 percent over a year earlier, and the average size of purchase per buying family was up fractionally. However, the frequency of purchase per buying family fell off about 5 percent.

Purchases of butter for household use increased about 1 million pounds from February to March 1956. The change in butter purchases for home use from February to March was upward by about 3 million pounds in 1954 but there was no change between February and March of 1955.

Margarine: Margarine purchases for household use during March 1956 were estimated at 94 million pounds, about 5 million pounds less than March 1955. Slightly less than 60 percent of all families reported buying margarine during March 1956 as compared with almost 62 percent in March 1955. Those families buying margarine bought less frequently during March 1956 than a year earlier, but they were buying larger average amounts per purchase (table 2).

For the year April 1955-March 1956, household purchases of margarine were about 2 percent larger but average prices were 6 percent lower than in the corresponding period a year earlier. The market for margarine, as indicated by the percentage of all families buying, showed virtually no change from the April 1954-March 1955 period to the April 1955-March 1956 period. During April 1955-March 1956, the frequency of purchase per buying family fell off almost 8 percent from the preceding 12-month period, but families buying margarine reported an increase of about 5 percent in the average size of purchase.

Household purchases of margarine declined about 5 million pounds from February to March 1956. In 1954 and 1955 the purchase movement was also downward from February to March by 3 and 4 million pounds, respectively.

About 19 percent of all families reported buying both butter and margarine in March 1956 while 13 percent bought neither. Compared with a year earlier, this indicated a drop of 1 percentage point for those families buying both products and no change for those buying neither product.

Cheese: Total household purchases of natural and processed cheese products (purchased weight basis) in March 1956 were estimated at 50.5 million pounds compared with 53.8 million pounds a year earlier. The decline of 3.3 million pounds in total cheese purchases from a year earlier reflected a drop of 3.5 million pounds in total processed cheese purchases and an increase of over 200,000 pounds in natural cheese purchases.

Natural cheese purchases by householders during March 1956 were estimated at 29.6 million pounds, about 1 percent more than a year earlier. Purchases of natural American and Swiss during March 1956 were less than a year earlier while purchases of cream and "other" types were higher than a year earlier. For the year ending March 31, 1956, total natural cheese purchases for home use were reported at about 4 percent larger than in April 1954-March 1955. The component increases were: American, 4 percent, Swiss, 5 percent; cream, 5 percent; and "other", 4 percent (table 4).

Total processed cheese purchases for household use in March 1956--including processed cheese, cheese spreads, and cheese foods--were reported at 21 million pounds. Household purchases of all types of processed cheese products during March 1956 were smaller than a year earlier, with declines ranging from 5 percent for cheese spreads to 33 percent for cheese foods. For the April 1955-March 1956 period, total purchases of processed cheese products for home use were reported at about 15 percent smaller than in the same period a year earlier, with processed cheese down 9 percent, cheese foods down 39 percent, and cheese spreads up 5 percent (table 5).

Cottage cheese purchases, which are not included in the totals above, were reported at 50.4 million pounds in March 1956 compared with 43.2 million in March 1955. The 17 percent gain during March 1956 over March 1955 was the largest year-to-year change for any of the 12 months ending March 31, 1956. This large gain in home purchases of cottage cheese was associated with a marked increase in the size of average purchase (table 6).

Purchases of cottage cheese for home use increased about 10 million pounds from February to March 1956, about double the gain from February to March in 1955. The average price paid by consumers for cottage cheese remained virtually unchanged from the preceding months and from a year earlier.

Nonfat Dry Milk Solids: Household purchases of nonfat dry milk solids during March 1956 totaled 13.1 million pounds as compared with 13.3 million pounds in March 1955. February and March 1956 were the only 2 months in the dairy marketing year April 1955-March 1956 in which consumers reported smaller purchase levels than in the same months a year earlier. For the 12 months ending March 31, 1956, purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for home use were about 16 percent larger than in the corresponding period of 1954-1955.

Consumers in this survey reported paying just over 39 cents per pound for nonfat dry milk solids in March 1956. This was almost 1 cent per pound less than a year earlier but virtually unchanged from the preceding several months. Householders reported larger average size purchases during March 1956 than a year earlier, a trend which started in October 1955 (table 7).

Beginning with the April 1956 issue, this report will include data on household purchases of butter, fluid whole milk, and fluid skim milk only. This change in coverage is based on the needs of the dairy industry. The January-March 1956 quarterly report will include, for the last time in this series, data on household purchases of cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine.

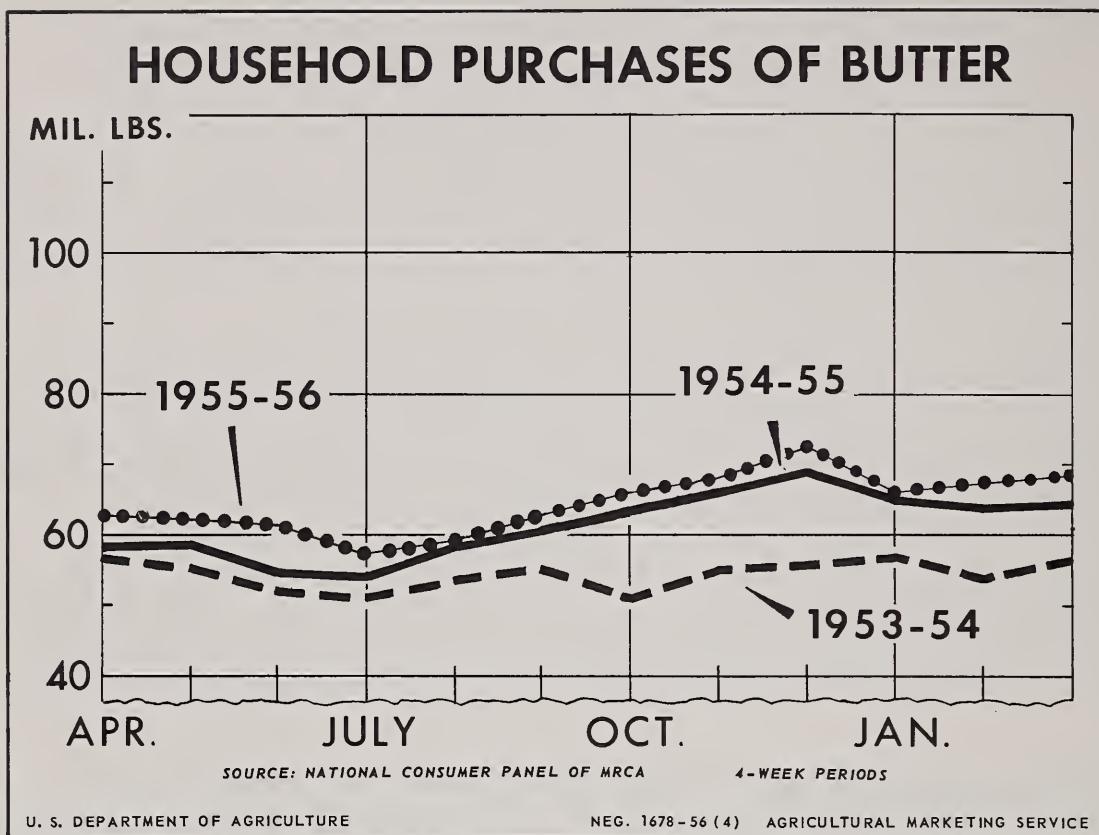


Figure 1

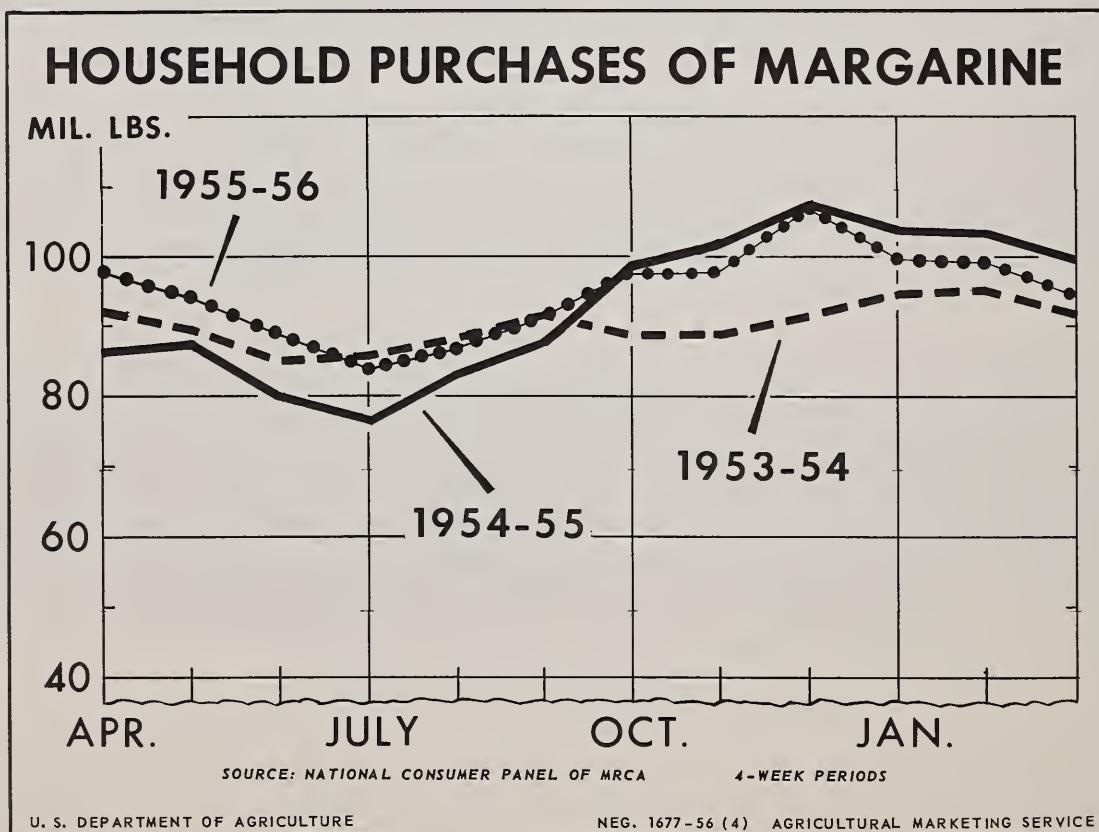


Figure 2

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound
U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid per pound				
	Total		Per 1,000 population								
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
April-----	62.7	58.0	56.2	388	367	369	67.2	66.6	75.4		
May-----	62.2	58.5	54.7	385	371	359	66.7	66.0	75.0		
June-----	61.3	54.5	51.9	380	345	340	66.5	65.7	74.5		
July-----	57.0	54.2	50.9	356	341	332	66.7	65.8	74.5		
August-----	58.7	57.9	53.3	366	364	348	66.7	66.0	74.7		
September-----	63.1	60.4	55.1	394	379	360	67.4	66.4	74.9		
October-----	66.0	63.2	51.0	409	394	331	67.7	68.1	75.3		
November-----	68.0	65.7	54.4	422	410	353	67.6	68.2	76.6		
December-----	72.4	69.2	55.5	449	432	361	67.8	68.6	76.0		
January-----	66.2	65.3	56.6	411	407	367	68.0	68.2	75.6		
February-----	67.2	63.8	53.4	417	398	346	67.8	67.7	75.2		
March-----	68.3	64.0	56.3	423	399	365	67.5	67.6	72.2		
April-----	44.0	44.7	2.64	2.74	2.71	1.09	1.09	1.06			
May-----	45.2	42.8	43.5	2.60	2.80	2.75	1.10	1.10	1.04		
June-----	44.6	41.4	42.7	2.60	2.72	2.64	1.09	1.09	1.04		
July-----	44.0	42.2	43.3	2.45	2.65	2.58	1.09	1.09	1.04		
August-----	45.1	43.3	44.2	2.50	2.81	2.67	1.08	1.08	1.03		
September-----	46.1	43.1	45.9	2.58	2.86	2.69	1.09	1.09	1.03		
October-----	46.3	45.4	43.7	2.68	2.84	2.59	1.10	1.09	1.02		
November-----	47.6	46.2	44.8	2.66	2.88	2.65	1.11	1.09	1.04		
December-----	49.0	48.5	44.4	2.70	2.66	2.68	1.13	1.11	1.05		
January-----	46.9	45.5	42.8	2.65	2.73	2.90	1.10	1.09	1.04		
February-----	46.5	45.6	42.2	2.70	2.65	2.73	1.10	1.10	1.04		
March-----	47.2	45.4	44.1	2.68	2.67	2.75	1.11	1.09	1.04		

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 2.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound
U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid per pound				
	Total		Per 1,000 population								
	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54		
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents		
April-----	97.5	86.3	92.1	604	546	605	25.3	26.2	26.2		
May-----	93.8	87.1	89.1	581	551	584	24.7	26.4	26.5		
June-----	89.1	79.9	84.5	551	506	554	24.7	26.7	26.0		
July-----	83.6	76.2	85.5	522	479	558	24.8	26.9	26.0		
August-----	86.6	82.7	88.0	540	520	574	25.0	26.8	26.1		
September-----	91.5	87.8	91.1	571	552	595	25.1	26.8	25.8		
October-----	97.8	98.7	88.2	606	616	573	24.7	26.2	25.4		
November-----	97.8	101.8	88.5	607	635	575	24.7	25.5	26.0		
December-----	107.3	107.4	91.8	666	670	597	24.6	25.7	26.7		
January-----	99.8	103.9	94.6	619	648	614	24.4	25.7	26.7		
February-----	99.2	103.4	94.7	615	645	600	24.3	25.7	25.8		
March-----	94.3	99.4	91.7	585	620	581	24.6	25.5	25.9		
April-----	60.3	56.4	58.6	2.19	2.38	2.47	1.52	1.45	1.43		
May-----	59.5	56.4	57.7	2.11	2.39	2.45	1.54	1.44	1.42		
June-----	57.3	54.7	56.9	2.08	2.25	2.35	1.54	1.45	1.43		
July-----	55.9	53.5	57.7	2.04	2.23	2.31	1.52	1.43	1.46		
August-----	57.1	55.7	58.7	2.08	2.31	2.36	1.51	1.44	1.45		
September-----	58.0	58.0	59.9	2.16	2.36	2.40	1.51	1.43	1.43		
October-----	59.2	62.4	58.9	2.21	2.39	2.24	1.54	1.46	1.49		
November-----	60.6	63.4	60.0	2.15	2.41	2.24	1.55	1.48	1.46		
December-----	63.4	63.7	60.0	2.20	2.29	2.37	1.59	1.53	1.47		
January-----	59.9	63.2	58.7	2.18	2.29	2.46	1.57	1.48	1.46		
February-----	60.0	63.3	60.7	2.15	2.25	2.37	1.58	1.51	1.45		
March-----	59.4	61.6	59.8	2.10	2.24	2.37	1.55	1.50	1.43		

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 3.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,
U. S., 4-week period, March 1956

Type	Percentage	Quantity purchased			Average	
	of all families buying any type	Average per purchases	Total	Per 1,000 population	price paid per unit	
	Percent	Ounces	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Unit	Cents
	1/	13.2	17,670	109.5	Lb.	63.2
	1/	9.2	3,310	20.5	Lb.	75.8
Natural	1/	6.0	3,950	24.5	3 oz.	13.9
American	1/	8.9	4,620	28.6	Lb.	76.4
Swiss						
Cream						
Other						
Processed						
Cheese	1/	10.4	9,320	57.8	Lb.	60.8
Cheese foods	1/	22.8	4,270	26.5	Lb.	44.0
Cheese spreads	1/	16.0	7,400	45.8	Lb.	48.9
Natural and Processed	58.6					
Cottage cheese	1/	17.5	50,410	312.4	12 oz.	21.1

1/ Estimated percentage buying each type is supplied in quarterly report.

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 4.--Natural Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases							
	American		Swiss		Cream		Other	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	1,000 pounds							
April-----	17,210	14,910	3,290	3,180	3,530	3,390	3,730	3,320
May-----	16,150	15,310	3,460	2,950	3,790	3,460	3,170	3,590
June-----	16,120	13,910	4,070	3,580	3,250	2,880	3,420	2,860
July-----	14,860	14,160	3,450	3,120	2,990	2,500	2,540	2,950
August-----	15,700	15,010	3,450	2,940	2,830	2,310	2,990	2,940
September-----	16,860	16,140	3,630	3,520	3,120	2,790	3,340	2,950
October-----	17,870	17,280	3,780	3,640	3,380	3,370	3,930	3,520
November-----	17,260	16,950	3,610	3,100	3,500	3,670	3,640	3,560
December-----	16,590	16,800	3,440	3,290	4,020	4,090	3,870	4,070
January-----	16,830	17,270	3,140	3,670	3,780	4,210	3,890	3,920
February-----	18,530	17,920	3,700	3,530	4,220	3,950	4,040	4,240
March-----	17,670	18,120	3,310	3,860	3,950	3,860	4,620	3,460
April-----								
May-----								
June-----								
July-----								
August-----								
September-----								
October-----								
November-----								
December-----								
January-----								
February-----								
March-----								

Period	Average price paid							
	Per pound						Per 3 oz.	
	American		Swiss		Other		Cream	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	62.3	63.6	73.2	78.0	75.4	75.5	14.0	14.1
May-----	63.8	63.0	73.1	76.8	75.8	77.4	14.2	14.3
June-----	63.2	62.3	72.9	75.4	78.7	74.4	14.2	14.3
July-----	63.9	63.0	75.9	75.0	78.2	74.0	14.2	14.4
August-----	63.9	62.9	73.8	75.1	76.4	76.1	14.1	14.4
September-----	63.2	62.0	72.7	74.2	79.6	77.2	14.1	14.2
October-----	62.6	62.0	71.8	72.7	77.8	77.4	14.2	13.7
November-----	62.9	62.8	72.8	74.9	78.2	74.7	14.4	13.5
December-----	64.0	63.0	75.7	75.1	78.4	81.9	14.2	13.9
January-----	63.3	63.3	75.1	72.0	77.9	75.8	14.2	13.7
February-----	62.9	62.8	74.3	72.5	78.3	78.8	14.1	14.2
March-----	63.2	63.4	75.8	72.1	76.4	75.4	13.9	14.0
April-----								
May-----								
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National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 5.--Processed cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases					
	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
April-----	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>
May-----	9,010	10,740	5,240	9,110	6,410	5,670
June-----	9,640	10,670	4,930	9,020	6,400	6,290
July-----	9,940	10,330	5,210	9,420	6,970	5,450
August-----	9,090	9,900	4,640	7,960	5,940	5,170
September-----	8,820	9,940	4,100	7,580	5,890	5,710
October-----	9,190	10,460	4,560	8,090	6,970	6,000
November-----	9,500	10,000	4,900	8,160	6,750	6,790
December-----	8,580	9,660	4,140	6,360	6,740	6,050
January-----	9,240	9,210	4,800	6,210	6,510	6,130
February-----	9,680	10,020	4,380	6,970	6,780	7,920
March-----	9,620	10,700	4,980	7,250	8,220	8,350
	9,320	10,380	4,270	6,340	7,400	7,800
Average price paid per pound						
Period	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	61.5	60.9	45.0	47.1	51.0	57.9
May-----	60.4	60.6	44.7	45.8	50.7	52.0
June-----	59.3	61.2	44.2	45.8	50.6	54.3
July-----	60.8	61.5	44.7	46.7	49.9	53.9
August-----	60.8	61.2	44.7	46.6	49.8	51.9
September-----	60.7	60.1	43.3	45.5	50.8	51.9
October-----	60.4	61.2	43.2	44.8	48.7	52.1
November-----	61.2	61.1	44.5	44.5	49.4	53.7
December-----	61.8	62.0	45.2	46.1	51.6	55.6
January-----	60.4	61.4	44.2	44.9	51.2	51.8
February-----	61.2	61.4	43.5	44.2	50.0	49.8
March-----	60.8	60.9	44.0	44.1	48.9	49.9

Table 6.--Cottage Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week period

Period	Average price paid						Size of average purchases	
	Purchases		Per 12-oz. unit	Per actual 12-oz. unit purchases	for all purchases	1955-56	1954-55	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
April-----	1,000	1,000	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Ounces	Ounces
	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>						
May-----	38,220	37,370	21.2	21.2	22.9	22.7	16.2	15.8
June-----	35,720	36,020	21.2	21.2	23.0	22.5	16.2	15.8
July-----	34,630	35,600	21.0	21.0	22.7	22.7	16.4	15.9
August-----	33,030	34,300	21.0	20.9	22.9	22.7	16.3	15.9
September-----	31,650	32,820	21.2	21.2	23.4	23.0	16.2	15.7
October-----	32,440	31,720	21.3	21.1	23.2	22.8	16.0	15.7
November-----	31,840	32,780	21.3	21.3	23.4	23.0	15.9	15.5
December-----	32,230	32,940	21.2	21.4	23.5	23.1	16.4	15.9
January-----	30,540	30,110	21.4	21.2	23.5	23.1	16.4	16.0
February-----	34,180	34,990	21.4	21.2	23.5	23.2	16.3	16.0
March-----	40,320	38,200	21.2	21.3	23.3	23.2	16.5	15.8
	50,410	43,240	21.1	21.2	23.3	23.0	17.5	16.0

Table 7.--Nonfat Dry milk solids: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid			
	Average per purchase		Total	Per 1,000 population		Per pound for all purchases		Per actual 1-pound unit purchases		
	1955-56	1954-55		1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56
			1,000	1,000						
	Ounces	Ounces	pounds	pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	19.5	21.1	13,500	11,080	83.6	70.2	39.7	38.1	35.4	36.7
May-----	19.9	21.1	13,180	10,880	81.6	68.9	39.5	37.8	35.4	36.1
June-----	20.4	22.6	12,420	9,560	76.9	60.5	39.9	37.3	35.8	35.4
July-----	20.5	23.5	12,140	9,560	75.8	60.1	39.7	36.4	35.8	34.8
August-----	20.0	22.6	11,720	9,410	73.1	59.1	39.6	35.5	35.9	33.7
September-----	20.8	22.0	12,230	9,910	76.3	62.3	38.7	36.7	34.9	34.1
October-----	21.3	20.6	12,330	10,860	76.5	67.7	38.7	38.3	35.4	35.0
November-----	21.5	20.3	12,420	10,660	77.0	66.5	39.5	38.5	36.1	35.9
December-----	21.5	19.9	12,880	10,110	79.9	63.1	39.7	39.7	36.6	35.6
January-----	21.1	18.9	12,910	12,360	80.0	77.1	39.6	40.5	36.2	36.1
February-----	21.5	18.8	13,350	13,510	82.7	84.2	39.5	40.3	36.3	35.8
March-----	21.8	18.6	13,090	13,280	81.2	82.8	39.3	40.2	35.9	35.8

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